

REMARKS

Summary

Claims 1-15 were pending and all of the claims were rejected in the present Office action. Claims 4, 7-8, 11 and 15 have been amended and Claims 1 and 12 have been cancelled; new Claims 16-24 have been introduced. Claims 2-11 and 13-24 are pending after entry of this amendment. No new matter has been introduced. The Applicant has carefully considered the references and the reasons presented by the Examiner and respectfully traverses the rejections in view of the amendments and the remarks presented below.

Rejections

35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over the Applicant's admitted prior art (AAPA) in combination with Obuchi et al. (US 2003/0059575; "Obuchi") or Nakabayashi et al. (US 2003/0021385; "Nanabayashi"). Claim 1 has been cancelled. The Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has not made out a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Claim 2 recites, *inter alia*, an illumination device in which a surface of the light guide plate is provided with a plurality of prism grooves arranged in stripes in plan view and having gently inclined faces and sharply inclined faces inclined at an inclination angle larger than an inclination angle of the gently inclined faces. The inclination angle of the sharply inclined faces increases away from the light source.

Claim 3 recites, *inter alia*, an illumination device in which a length of the sharply inclined faces increases away from the light source.

In contrast, Obuchi, in the paragraphs cited by the Examiner [0115 and 0116], “ a plurality of minute V-grooves...as illustrated in Fig. 1...hav[ing] pitches gradually decreasing from the light incident side to the opposite end....” An examination of Fig. 1 does not reveal any of the aspects of Claims 2 and 3 recited above. The V-grooves appear to be of constant depth and shape, with only the pitch changing. The grooves taught by Obuchi also have sides with equal angles, and therefore there is no teaching of a groove having a gently inclined face and a sharply inclined face, nor of a groove where the angles change as a function of distance from the light source as in the arrangement in Claims 2 and 3.

Further, Nakabayashi, at paragraphs [0038] and [0039] cited by the Examiner, teaches that the side having the sharply angled faces has a fixed angle, and only the side having the shallow angle has its angle θ_2 varied in order to change the depth of the grooves or to reduce the pitch. (Id.,[0038]) [[N.B., the notation of the reference differs from that of the present application in that the sharp angle is θ_1 rather than θ_2]. In contrast, the arrangement of Claim 2 has a fixed sharp angle, and the arrangement of Claim 3 does not require the variation of the shallow angle.

Neither Obuchi nor Nakabayashi in combination with the Examiner's interpretation of the AAPA teaches or suggests all of the elements and limitations of Claims 2 and 3, and thus a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been made out.

Claim 4 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*, an illumination device where the pitch of the grooves is constant.

As the Examiner maintains that Obuchi and Nakabayashi each teach that the pitch of the grooves decreases, the references do not teach this limitation of Claim 4, and the claim is allowable.

Claims 5-11 are independently allowable, but as they are claims dependent on an allowable base claim they are allowable, without more.

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Neither Obuchi nor Nakabayashi in combination with the Examiner's interpretation of the AAPA teaches or suggests all of the elements and limitations of Claims 2 and 3, and thus a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been made out.

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As the Examiner maintains that Obuchi and Nakabayashi each teach that the pitch of the grooves decreases, the references do not teach this limitation of Claim 4, and the claim is allowable.

Claims 5-11 are independently allowable, but as they are claims dependent on an allowable base claim they are allowable, without more.

Claims 12-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over the Applicant's admitted prior art (AAPA) in combination with Obuchi et al. (US 2003/0059575; "Obuchi") or Nakabayashi et al. (US 2003/0021385; "Nakabayashi"). Claim 12 has been cancelled and Claim 15 has been amended. Claims 13-15 recite, *inter alia*, the features of Claims 2-4 discussed above, and are allowable for the same reasons.

New Claims

New Claims 16-24 have been introduced to further claim subject matter to which the Applicant is entitled. Claims 16-23 are allowable, without more, as claims dependent on allowable independent claims. Claim 24 recites subject matter which, in accordance with the remarks above, is not taught or suggested by the Examiner's interpretation of the AAPA and the references cited, and is therefore allowable.

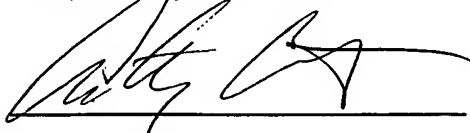
Conclusion

Claims 1-15 are pending. Claims 1 and 12 have been cancelled; Claims 4, 7-8, 11, and 15 have been amended; new Claims 16-24 have been introduced. Claims 1-11 and 13-24 are pending after entry of this amendment.

For at least the reasons given above, the Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are allowable and request that a Notice of Allowance issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned in the event that a telephone interview would expedite consideration of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony P. Curtis', written over a horizontal line.

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